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GRANT, BY THE CITY, OF THE USE OF  
ADDITIONAL LAND IN BRONX PARK

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THE NEW YORK BOTANICAL GARDEN



# MAP OF SITE

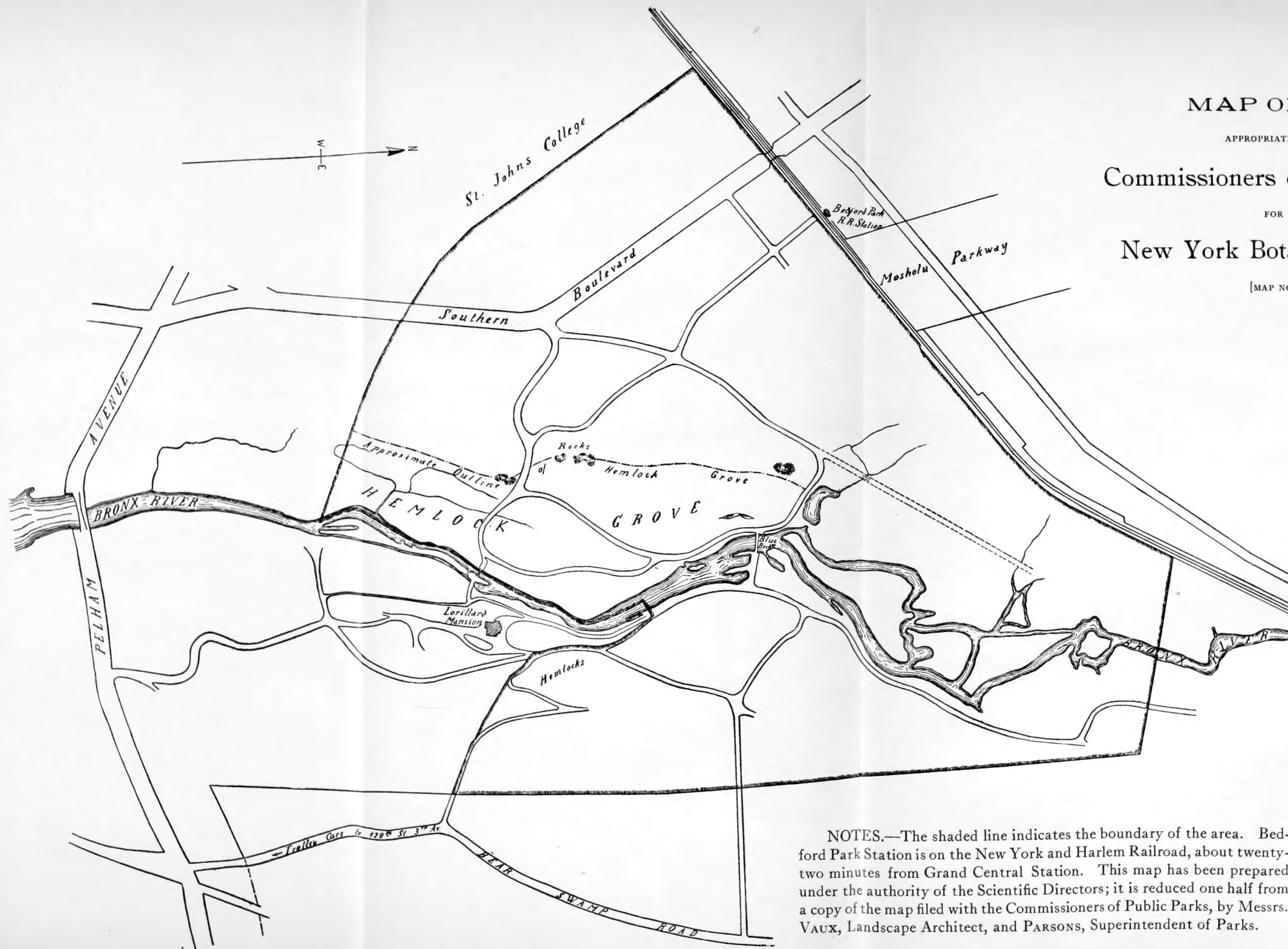
APPROPRIATED BY THE

Commissioners of Public Parks

FOR THE

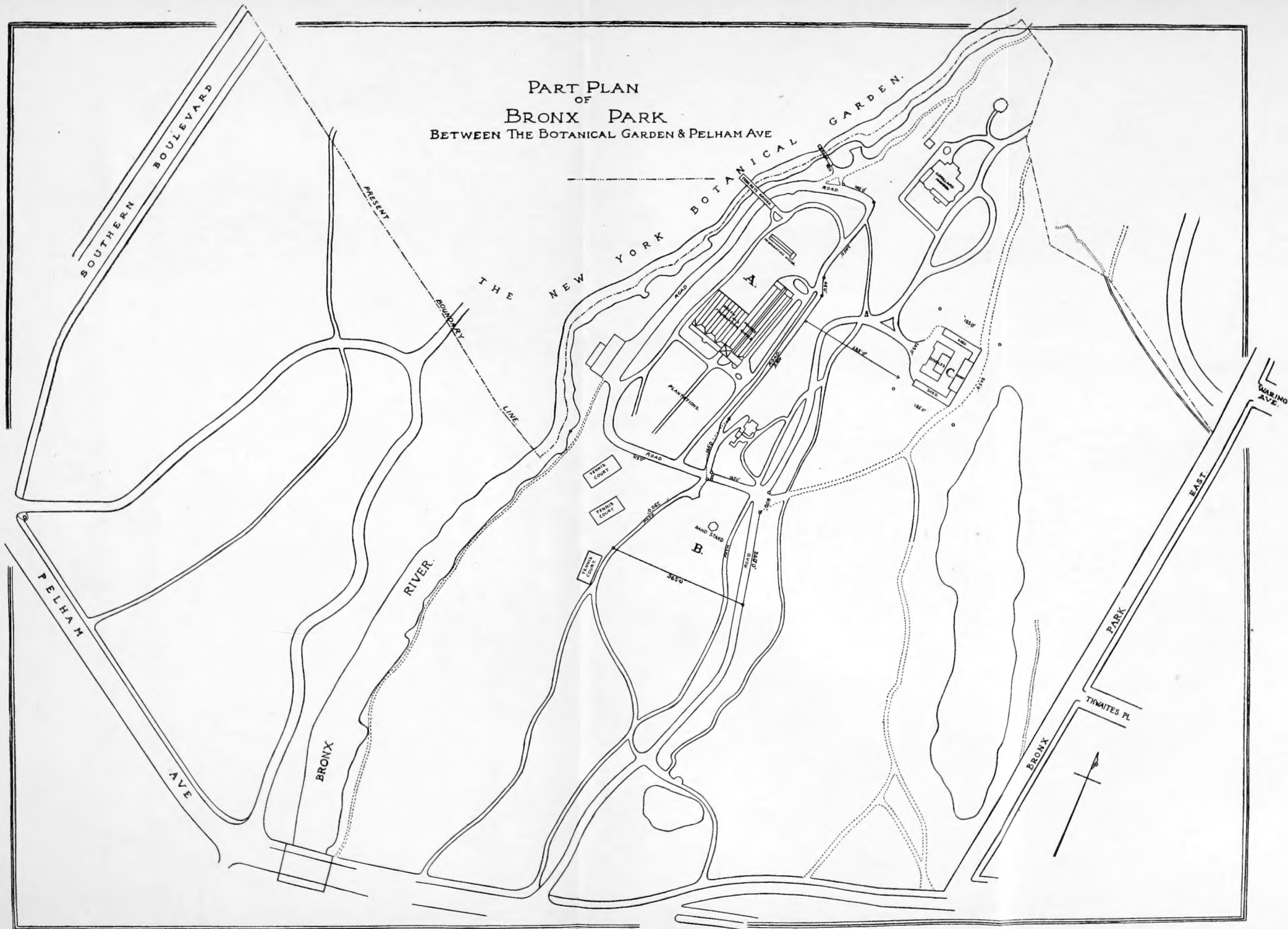
New York Botanical Garden.

[MAP NO. 568]



NOTES.—The shaded line indicates the boundary of the area. Bedford Park Station is on the New York and Harlem Railroad, about twenty-two minutes from Grand Central Station. This map has been prepared under the authority of the Scientific Directors; it is reduced one half from a copy of the map filed with the Commissioners of Public Parks, by Messrs. VAUX, Landscape Architect, and PARSONS, Superintendent of Parks.

PART PLAN  
OF  
BRONX PARK  
BETWEEN THE BOTANICAL GARDEN & PELHAM AVE





## GRANT, BY THE CITY, OF THE USE OF ADDITIONAL LAND IN BRONX PARK

### I.

November 9, 1914.

TO THE BOARD OF ESTIMATE AND APPORTIONMENT.

*Gentlemen:* The Board of Managers of the New York Botanical Garden hereby request, pursuant to the provisions of Chapter 473 of the Laws of the State of New York for 1914, that your Honorable Board will set aside and appropriate, for the extension and development of the work and objects of the New York Botanical Garden, all that portion of Bronx Park shown upon a certain map thereof numbered five hundred and sixty-eight and signed by Messrs. Vaux and Parsons and filed with the former department of public parks of the corporation known as the mayor, aldermen and commonalty of the City of New York (of which map a copy is submitted herewith), situated between the land of Bronx Park heretofore appropriated for the use of the said New York Botanical Garden in Bronx Park and the northern side of Pelham Avenue, upon such conditions as your Honorable Board may deem expedient.

Since the appropriation by the Commissioners of Parks of the present site of the New York Botanical Garden in Bronx Park, by resolution adopted by the Board of Parks July 31, 1895, shown and described on said map No. 568 of the Park Department, the institution has rapidly attained international importance. Through the expenditure of funds derived both from the city

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and from the public at large, the reservation has been developed from an area of wild land into an elegant park and garden. No portion of the land has been withdrawn from public use, and the Board of Managers has conformed in every particular to the provision of the act of the legislature establishing the corporation that the grounds shall be open free to the public daily, including Sundays, and that its educational and scientific privileges shall be open to all alike, male and female. The development includes the construction of some four miles of driveways, eight miles of paths, comprehensive systems of drainage and water-supply, the largest greenhouses in America, and the largest botanical museum in the world, which, besides collections open daily to the public, contains laboratories for the use of special students and investigators, a large lecture hall, where free public lectures are delivered on Saturday afternoons and lectures are given to children of the public schools; also a library of selected literature on botany, horticulture and related subjects, containing over 25,000 bound volumes, and the largest herbarium in the United States. The labeled living plants in the grounds and greenhouses include over 13,000 different kinds. The museum of economic botany, now containing over 8,000 specimens, illustrates the products of plants utilized in the arts, sciences and industries. A great deal of time and labor has been spent in authenticating the specimens forming this collection, which is referred to continually as a standard representation of commercial products. Additions to all the collections are continually being made. The Garden has published over fifty volumes and parts of works containing important contributions to botanical and horticultural science and popular accounts of plant life in its various phases. Through the expenditure of corporation funds and of gifts from members of the Board of Managers and other friends, over 100 expeditions have been sent to regions little known botanically and valuable and unique collections have thus been secured. The expenditure of corporation and private funds, in supplementing city appropriations for development and maintenance of the grounds and buildings, for forming the collections of plants, specimens and books, for educational and scientific



work and for publication has been \$525,482.26, and the total of permanent interest-bearing funds of the corporation, derived mainly from gifts and bequests, now amounts to \$522,500. To these may be added a recent bequest of \$25,000 by Mrs. Maria DeWitt Jesup, and two other bequests, aggregating \$25,000, subject to life interests. The value of the collections of plants, books and specimens already brought together is not less than \$400,000.

In the spring and in the autumn, lectures and demonstrations have been given to children from the public schools, accompanied by their teachers, supplementary to the nature-study work of the school curriculum. The total attendance at such lectures since 1905 has been over 115,000, the average attendance at each lecture being about 450. The average attendance at the public Saturday afternoon lectures, which have been given continuously since the museum building was completed in 1898, is about 100. Provision has been made for the further instruction of children and of the general public by detailing assistants to accompany visitors to the grounds, buildings and collections, to answer their questions and to describe the uses and characteristics of plants. Parties of children, from both public and private schools, visit the Garden under the guidance and instruction of their teachers. Very much information is sent by mail, in answer to a constantly increasing number of questions about plants and their uses. The Garden has become one of the chief educational influences of the city, and on account of the scientific work done there attracts many students not only from other educational institutions of the city, but from other parts of the country and from abroad.

In the development of the present reservation, the greatest care has been taken jealously to preserve and retain all natural features, including the forested areas of the Bronx valley and its contiguous hills, and other woodland areas, with special reference to the hemlock forest, and the tracts of meadow at the northern end of the grounds. It has been necessary from landscape considerations also to retain considerable areas in broad lawns. The amount of land remaining available for plantations of trees,

shrubs and other plants has proved insufficient for a satisfactory representation of all kinds of plants which will grow in our latitude, and this is particularly the case as regards trees and shrubs. The greatly increased public interest in trees, and indeed in all plants, during the last few years makes it very desirable that additional space be provided for the further development of the institution.

The land of Bronx Park lying south of the present southern boundary of the Garden reservation and the northern side of Pelham Avenue would furnish this desirable area for expansion. The portion of it now naturally wooded is in direct continuation southward from the forested areas of the present site, and placing the additional land under the control of the Botanical Garden would ensure its uniformity of maintenance and preservation and uniform treatment of the whole of the gorge of the Bronx River, probably the most important and attractive natural feature remaining within the limits of the city. The portions now existing as unplanted and open fields and slopes may be beautified by the planting of trees, and decorative border plantations of flowering shrubs and herbaceous plants may be established along the streets which bound this portion of the park. There would be no need nor desire for the construction of additional buildings on this land, because, when completed, the buildings on the present reservation will be amply sufficient. The buildings now standing on the additional land asked for could be utilized to advantage by the Garden, assuming that arrangements may be made which would not embarrass the Park Department by withdrawing them from their present uses.

In order to avoid the possibility of any embarrassment, the use and control of such buildings as are at present needed by the Park Department might remain with that department until their equivalents might be provided on other park lands. The use of such land about these buildings needed by the Park Department for plant nurseries might also similarly remain with that department.

The appropriation of the additional tract of land would bring the southern boundary of the Botanical Garden south to the

northern side of Pelham Avenue, which avenue would then constitute a natural line of demarcation between the Botanical Garden and the Zoological Park. The area thus added to the Botanical Garden would be subject to all the conditions applying to the present reservation and at all times would be free to the public.

The board of managers of the New York Botanical Garden has referred the presentation of this request to the executive committee and has authorized its signature by the president and the secretary in behalf of the board. If desired the executive committee will appear before your honorable board at such time as may be indicated.

Herewith is submitted a pamphlet containing the act of incorporation, by-laws and other administrative documents, and another pamphlet showing present officers, and membership.

Respectfully submitted,

W. GILMAN THOMPSON,  
*President,*

N. L. BRITTON,  
*Secretary*

## II

CITY OF NEW YORK  
BOARD OF ESTIMATE AND APPORTIONMENT  
Cal. No. 94.

February 3, 1915.

MR. N. L. BRITTON, Secretary,  
New York Botanical Garden,  
Bronx Park, New York City.

*Sir:* I transmit herewith certified copy of resolution adopted by the Board of Estimate and Apportionment on January 29, 1915, setting aside and appropriating for the extension and development of the work and objects of the New York Botanical Garden, that portion of Bronx Park situated between the southerly boundary of the land in Bronx Park heretofore appropriated for the use of said The New York Botanical Garden by the board of commissioners of the Department of Public Parks,

and the northern side of Pelham Avenue, as more fully described in the enclosed resolution.

Respectfully,

(Signed) JOSEPH HAAG,

*Secretary*

(94)

*Resolved:* That the Board of Estimate and Apportionment, as authorized by Chapter 473 of the Laws of 1914, hereby sets apart and appropriates for the extension and development of the work and objects of The New York Botanical Garden, that portion of Bronx Park in The City of New York situated between the southerly boundary of the land in Bronx Park heretofore appropriated for the use of said The New York Botanical Garden by the board of commissioners of the Department of Public Parks, and the northern side of Pelham Avenue, which is more particularly bounded and described as follows, to wit:

Beginning at a point on the easterly line of the Southern Boulevard, where the said Boulevard intersects the southern boundary line of the Botanical Garden, which point is 1,401 feet north of the northerly line of the Bronx and Pelham Parkway; thence easterly along the line of the southerly boundary line of said Botanical Garden to the middle of the Bronx River, a distance of 1,300 feet; thence northerly along the middle of the Bronx River to a point where the southerly boundary line of the Botanical Garden intersects the said river, a distance of 1,815 feet; thence easterly along the said southerly boundary line to the westerly line of Bronx Park East, a distance of 1,301 feet; thence southerly along the westerly line of Bronx Park East to the northerly line of the Bronx and Pelham Parkway, a distance of 1,393 feet; thence westerly along the northerly line of the Bronx and Pelham Parkway to the easterly line of the Southern Boulevard, a distance of 2,861 feet; thence northerly along the easterly line of the Southern Boulevard to the point of beginning, a distance of 1,401 feet, which said land, including Parcels "A," "B," and "C," excepted and reserved as hereinafter set forth, consists of approximately 150 acres, excepting thereout and re-

serving therefrom, however, all those three certain tracts or parcels of land, respectively bounded and described as follows, to wit:

*Parcel "A"—Greenhouses, Propagating Houses and Grounds Adjacent*

Beginning at a point on the easterly shore of Bronx River at the intersection of the prolongation westerly of the southerly side of road which forms the southerly boundary of greenhouse grounds; running easterly along said prolongation and said southerly side of road for a distance of approximately 375 feet to the easterly side of road which forms the easterly boundary of greenhouse grounds; thence northwesterly along easterly side of said road for a distance of approximately 165 feet; thence northeasterly along said easterly line of road for a distance of approximately 400 feet; thence northwesterly along said easterly side of road for a distance of approximately 44 feet; thence northeasterly along said easterly side of road for a distance of approximately 240 feet westerly along northerly side of road which forms the northerly boundary of greenhouse grounds for a distance of approximately 100 feet; thence northwesterly for a distance of approximately 90 feet to the easterly shore of Bronx River; thence southerly along the line of the easterly shore of Bronx River to the point or place of beginning.

*Parcel "B"—Band Stand and Grounds Adjacent*

Beginning at a point 375 feet east of the easterly shore of Bronx River on the southerly side of road which forms the southerly boundary of greenhouse grounds, running thence northwesterly along prolongation southerly of the easterly side of road which forms the easterly boundary of greenhouse grounds for a distance of approximately 20 feet; thence easterly on the northerly side of road which forms the southerly boundary of greenhouse grounds for a distance of approximately 163 feet; thence southerly on the easterly side of main road leading to Pelham Avenue for a distance of approximately 60 feet; thence southeasterly along said easterly side of said road for a distance

of approximately 240 feet; thence westerly for a distance of approximately 365 feet to the westerly side of path; thence northeasterly along westerly side of said path for a distance of approximately 290 feet to the southerly side of road which forms the southerly boundary of greenhouse grounds; thence easterly along said southerly side of said road for a distance of approximately 20 feet to the point or place of beginning.

*Parcel "C"—Department Shop and Stables*

A rectangular plot 245 feet by 185 feet, lying approximately 285 feet east of the easterly side of road which forms the easterly boundary of greenhouse grounds, and determined by a line distant 35 feet from and running parallel to the four sides of the building known and distinguished as the Department of Parks, Bronx, Stables and Sheds.

The appropriation hereby made is upon the following conditions, to wit:

1. The grounds of the entire tract hereby and heretofore appropriated for the use of said The New York Botanical Garden shall be and continue open and free to the public to the same extent as the grounds heretofore appropriated are now actually open and free to the public.

2. Provision satisfactory to the Board of Estimate and Apportionment shall be made for the accommodation of picnic parties upon the lands hereby and heretofore set apart and appropriated for the use of said The New York Botanical Garden, but not more than ten acres thereof shall be used for such purposes.

3. Upon the direction of the Board of Estimate and Apportionment areas not exceeding five acres in all, within any lands hereby and heretofore set apart and appropriated for the use of said The New York Botanical Garden, may be established for baseball, tennis or other playground uses. The three tennis courts as now laid out may be continued in their present location until substitute locations are agreed upon. If adequate and suitable playground space be made available in Bronx River

Parkway or other park areas, such space within the grounds above set apart and appropriated will not be required. The New York Botanical Garden shall not be subjected to any expense in connection with the provisions of this paragraph.

4. The Commissioner of Parks for the Borough of The Bronx shall retain and have right, power and authority to maintain the existing band stand and may furnish band concerts as heretofore.

A true copy of resolution adopted by the Board of Estimate and Apportionment, January 29, 1915.

(Signed) JOSEPH HAAG,  
*Secretary*

### III

At the regular meeting held April 15, 1915, the foregoing communication from the Board of Estimate and Apportionment was presented, and the Managers examined a map accompanying it entitled "Part Plan of Bronx Park between the Botanical Garden and Pelham Avenue," signed by Thomas W. Whittle, Commissioner of Parks, Bronx, showing the three parcels of land reserved for the use of the Park Department, and the inclusion of the Lorillard Mansion and two outbuildings in the land appropriated for the use of the Garden.

On motion of Mr. Stetson, and unanimously carried, the following resolution was adopted:

*Resolved:* That the Board of the New York Botanical Garden hereby accepts the grant to it by the City of New York, pursuant to the vote of the Board of Estimate and Apportionment, upon January 29, 1915, of the additional land in Bronx Park, as authorized by the Act, Chapter 473 of the Laws of 1914.

A communication was received from the Scientific Directors conveying recommendations relative to the development of the additional land and for uses of the Lorillard Mansion, including proposed necessary repairs to the Lorillard Mansion, the use of its basement for shops and storage and of parts of the upper stories for horticultural laboratories; also the general cleaning up of the tract by the removal of dead trees, stumps and rubbish and the

drainage of stagnant pools, much of which work had already been accomplished during the winter; also that the present use of rooms in the Lorillard Mansion by the Bronx Society of Arts and Sciences be continued, and that the Horticultural Society of New York be permitted to occupy certain rooms in the building as offices. The recommendations were approved and the following resolutions were adopted:

*Resolved:* That a survey and plans for development of the additional area be obtained from the landscape engineer before any considerable amount of construction or planting be undertaken.

*Resolved:* That the director-in-chief be, and he hereby is, authorized to continue the permission formerly given the Bronx Society of Arts and Sciences by the Commissioner of Parks of the Borough of the Bronx to occupy a portion of the Lorillard Mansion for museum purposes, until otherwise instructed, it being understood that no expenses directly connected with such museum shall be borne by The New York Botanical Garden.

*Resolved:* That the director-in-chief be, and he hereby is, authorized to permit the Horticultural Society of New York to occupy rooms in the Lorillard Mansion as offices, until otherwise instructed, it being understood that no expenses directly connected with such occupancy shall be borne by The New York Botanical Garden.

N. L. BRITTON,  
*Secretary.*

#### IV

This action by the city places the whole of Bronx Park north of Pelham Avenue within the management and control of the New York Botanical Garden, with the exception of three parcels of land east of the Bronx River, on which stand the greenhouses, barn, the old snuff-mill used as a shop, and a band stand, these areas being reserved for the use of the Park Department of the Borough of The Bronx. The original reservation established in 1895 included 250 acres; the present grant adds over 140 acres, making the total area of the Botanical Garden nearly 400 acres, and thus the largest botanical garden in the temperate zones.



The additional land has a frontage of about 1,400 feet on the Southern Boulevard, about 2,860 feet on Pelham Avenue, and about 1,300 feet on the graded but uncompleted Bronx Park East, which bounds the Garden on its entire eastern side, the total frontage on Bronx Park East being about 5,000 feet, or nearly a mile. Both the banks of the Bronx River from Pelham Avenue to Williamsbridge are now included in the reservation, except the portion of the eastern bank extending from the old snuff-mill to a point near the Lorillard Mansion, this stretch forming the western boundary of one of the parcels of land reserved for the Park Department.

The additional land, west of the Bronx River, includes the extreme southern end of the Hemlock Forest, which is now entirely within the Garden reservation; open woodlands in continuation of the deciduous woods west of the hemlock grove southward to Pelham Avenue; and considerable areas of open fields and slopes available for new plantations. East of the Bronx River, there are other well-wooded areas, open fields and glades suitable for plantations, and a fine large lake seated deep among rocky ridges. The natural features of the tract are thus very attractive and the policy of maintaining them as those of the older reservation have been maintained will be followed.

The driveway system of the additional land is, for the most part, already constructed, though an important connection east of the Bronx River remains uncompleted; it will be necessary, however, to construct several miles of paths after a complete plan of development has been adopted, the study of which has already been commenced. Improvements were begun soon after the action of the Board of Estimate and Apportionment by the removal of over 1,000 dead, diseased or otherwise undesirable trees and of a large number of stumps, by gathering together and carting away many cart loads of fallen limbs and rubbish, and by the labeling of over 350 trees; the patrol by Garden keepers has been extended through the tract on both sides of the river; rough banks at the Linnaean Bridge on Pelham Avenue have been graded and planted, and ditches have been dug and opened to drain some mosquito-breeding and unsightly pools.

Much of the forest, grading and drainage work done has been accomplished, in part, through coöperation with the New York Association for Improving the Condition of the Poor, by means of an arrangement entered into with that association early in March, and still in force. The association sends about twenty men to the Garden each day, the same men on alternate days of the week, and supplies funds for their daily wages. The men are scattered around on various pieces of work mixed in with trained laborers and gardeners, work the same hours, and are discharged if inefficient, others sent by the Association taking their places. This experiment has been of the very greatest interest to the officials of the Garden and of the Association for Improving the Condition of the Poor, inasmuch as it has proven to be an effective way of having necessary work done and at the same time distributing money to persons very much in need of it.

The Lorillard Mansion, picturesquely located just east of the Bronx River and high above it, comes to the uses of the Garden with the additional land. The house is well and substantially built of stone and dates from 1856. It needs painting and considerable carpenter work to put it in repair and will be very useful for a variety of purposes. Near it stand a large and fine *Paulownia* tree, probably planted about the time the house was built, and a very fine and interesting weeping beech. There are many other large and fine trees within the new reservation.

N. L. BRITTON,  
*Director-in-Chief.*

New York Botanical Garden Library



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